

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JOHANN 01518 151524Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 HA-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EUR-12 /107 W
-----075851 151601Z /40

P 151410Z JUN 78

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7832
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL DURBAN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JOHANNESBURG 1518

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SF
SUBJECT: SECOND ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION ON JUNE 16 OF SOWETO
1976

1. IN LIGHT OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHAT MAY TRANSPIRE JUNE 16
IN JOHANNESBURG, SOWETO, AND OTHER TOWNS AND TOWNSHIPS NEARBY,
POST WILL CLOSE SOWETO READING ROOM THAT DAY. IN ADDITION,
USG EMPLOYEES WILL BE EXCUSED FROM WORK EARLY IF THEY WISH
ATTEND MEMORIAL SERVICE OR AVOID POSSIBLE TROUBLES EN ROUTE
HOME. THERE IS SOME APPREHENSION OF DANGER FELT BY BOTH WHITE
AND BLACK EMPLOYEES.

2. BISHOP MANAS BUTHELEZI TOLD CG JUNE 15 HE BELIEVED BLACKS
WISHED KEEP ANNIVERSARY QUIET, BUT SUSPECTED POLICE MIGHT
PROVOKE CONFRONTATION. POLICE ARE EVIDENT IN SOWETO IN FORCE
AND HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN PAST FEW DAYS IN DETAINING POTENTIAL
MILITANTS. ONE SIGN OF CLOSER SURVEILLANCE AND THIGHTER CONTROL
IS REPORTED BANNING JUNE 15 OF CHURCH MAGAZINE "THE VOICE."
ANOTHER IS DETENTION IN PAST TEN DAYS OF ALL YOUNG CHRISTIAN
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PAGE 02 JOHANN 01518 151524Z

WORKERS' EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS BUT TWO.

3. ANOTHER ASPECT OF BLACKS' ORGANIZING MEMORIAL SERVICES IS
OF COURSE THAT OF A WORK BOYCOTT. WHILE THIS ASPECT IS UNVOICED
IT IS PRESENT. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE DEGREE OF ABSENTEEISM
IN JOHANNESBURG OFFICES JUNE 16. INTIMIDATION OF WORKERS IS
UNLIKELY, GIVEN STUDENTS' CALL FOR CALM, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE IN

SOME CASES.

4. BRITISH AND AUSTRALIAN MISSIONS SUGGESTED TO POST THAT THE THREE OFFICES JOINTLY SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO JUNE 16 MEMORIAL SERVICE AT REGINA MUNDI CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SOWETO. POST RESPONDED NO ON SEVERAL GROUNDS, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE OF RISK OF TROUBLE, SUSPICION BY SOME WE MIGHT BE CAPITALIZING UPON TRAGEDY IN SUCH PUBLIC WAY FOR POLITICAL REASONS, AND FACT THAT CG AND CONSUL HAD ALREADY ATTDED MEMORIAL VIGIL SERVICE AT ST. MARY'S ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL. ATTENDANCE NOT PUBLICIZED, BUT COULD BE MENTIONED IF QUESTION AROSE "WHERE WERE AMERICANS?"
JOHNSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY CONTROLS, COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JOHANN01518
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780250-0803
Format: TEL
From: JOHANNESBURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780657/aaaabwrb.tel
Line Count: 74
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: af9c6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2342212
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECOND ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION ON JUNE 16 OF SOWETO 1976
TAGS: PINS, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/af9c6088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014